

Now, we're about to enter a new century with problems and opportunities unparalleled in history, speeding along at a pace and with a complexity that would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. There is a lot of good in the fact that the knowledge of the world is now doubling—sheer facts are doubling every 5 years. We see in the human genome project miraculous health discoveries being made almost weekly now.

But we also know that in this new world, where the Internet is exploding and 65,000 new sites are being added every hour of every day, that there will be new ways that people who are organized for the abuse of their power will present new threats, perhaps terrorists or organized criminals or narcotraffickers, perhaps in the forms of chemical or biological or small-scale nuclear weapons, perhaps unwise leaders being too greedy in the short run, forcing poor people off their land into the teeming cities of poor countries, devastating the environment, leading to the spread of disease.

So we will now live in a new area where humankind will have all kinds of new possibilities for good and all manner of new things that need to be fought against. I hope that the children of this age will find a way to believe in America the way President Kennedy helped me to believe in America and to believe that the political process leaves the ultimate power in the people and gives its elected Representatives a precious chance just to bring out the good and stand against the bad. It is the eternal human obligation. He made it seem fun and noble and good. The least we can do is to keep the torch burning.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in the Hall of the Americas at the Organization of American States. In his remarks, he referred to Victoria Kennedy, wife of Senator Edward Kennedy; Caroline Kennedy and her husband, Edward Schlossberg; John F. Kennedy, Jr.; Paul Kirk, chair, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Foundation Dinner; and Secretary General César Gaviria of the Organization of American States.

Remarks on Signing a Memorandum on Standards To Prevent Drinking and Driving

March 3, 1998

The President. Thank you, Brenda, and I thank the other members of the Frazier family and the friends who are here in support of you. Attorney General Reno, Senator Lautenberg, Congresswoman Lowey, Senator DeWine, Chief Flynn, thank you for your work and your support. I thank Secretary Slater, Senator Dorgan, Senator Hollings, Senator Moseley-Braun, and Congressman McGovern for their presence and their support. And I thank the Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Students Against Destructive Decisions, the organizations for highway safety, all of you who are here in this noble endeavor.

Let me say that after hearing Brenda Frazier's story there is very little that needs to be said. After seeing the photograph of Ashley, there is very little that needs to be seen. Every parent in this country, every single one, who has ever put his or her child in a car with someone else to go off to some destination, has felt that sense of loss of control, that fear that something might happen. Every parent of a teenager has spent some moment on every weekend of the teenager's life, when the teenager was out, wondering, hoping, and praying that nothing would ever happen.

To be reminded that these things do happen should be all the reminder any Member of Congress or any American ever needs. We've heard Brenda's story, but there is hardly a family or community in America that hasn't been touched by drunk driving. Senator Dorgan, we thank you especially for being here today, because you lost your mother, Dorothy, to a drunk driver. And we know that this is a national problem. Senator DeWine reminded us that in 1984 President Reagan signed into law the legislation to help make 21 the national drinking age. Senator Lautenberg fought for that law in Congress because he knew that most of all our young people were threatened.

Eleven years later, I was proud to sign into law the zero tolerance legislation that is helping to make it illegal for a person under 21 to drive in any State after drinking any measurable amount of alcohol, no matter what the legal limit is. I say to you, if we win this battle and you want to come back for a lower limit, I'll be glad to stand here with you under those circumstances as well. The "Safe and Sober Streets Act" takes the next step to lower the legal limit to .08 in every State. When Congress passes it I'll sign it, and we'll work hard to pass it.

Today there is something else I'd like to do. I am instructing Secretary Slater to report back to me in 45 days with a plan to make .08 the legal limit on all Federal property, from National Parks to military bases, so that the United States can lead the way in making .08 the law of the land all over the land.

Lowering the legal limit to .08 will not prevent adults from enjoying alcoholic beverages. But lowering the limit will make responsible Americans take even greater care when they drink alcohol in any amounts if they intend to drive.

To people who disregard the lethal threat they pose when they drink and drive, lowering the legal limit will send a strong message that our Nation will not tolerate irresponsible acts that endanger our children and our Nation. We will, meanwhile, continue to do all we can to protect our young people from harm, fighting to keep drugs and guns and alcohol out of our schools and our children's lives, fighting to shield them from the deadly harm of illegal exposure and use of tobacco.

With the steps we take today, we will build on that progress to help to ensure that the lives of Ashley Frazier, Dorothy Dorgan, and thousands of others cut short by drunk driving will not have been lost in vain.

Now, in a few moments I want to ask Ashley's classmates who are here, members of my Cabinet, and the Members of Congress who are here to join me as I sign the Presidential directive on Federal property. But before I do, if you will indulge me, because of the action of the United Nations Security Council with regard to Iraq and because this is the only chance I have to appear before the press and therefore the American people today, I would like to make a brief statement.

The unanimous vote of the United Nations Security Council last night sends a clear message. Iraq must fulfill without obstruction or delay its commitment to open all of the nation to the international weapons inspectors—anyplace, anytime, without any conditions, deadlines, or excuses.

All the members of the Security Council agree that failure to do so will result in severest consequences. The Government of Iraq should be under no illusion. The meaning of "severest consequences" is clear. It provides authority to act if Iraq does not turn the commitment it has now made into compliance.

As the Secretary-General told the Security Council yesterday, Iraq's complete fulfillment of these obligations is the one and only aim of the agreement. No promise of peace and no policy of patience can be without its limits. Iraq's words must be matched by deeds. The world is watching.

Now, I would like to ask Ashley's classmates, the members of the Cabinet, and the Members of Congress, as well as Chief Flynn, would you all join us up here now, and Brenda, please.

[At this point, the President signed the memorandum on standards to prevent drinking and driving.]

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:16 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brenda Frazier, mother of Ashley Frazier, who was killed by a drunk driver; Edward Flynn, chief of police, Arlington County, VA; and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Memorandum on Standards To Prevent Drinking and Driving

March 3, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation

Subject: Standards to Prevent Drinking and Driving

We have made progress in improving highway safety through a variety of innovative and aggressive initiatives, including our "Buckle Up America" campaign to increase safety